

Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., today said, "As the first and only statue of an African American in Statuary Hall, Mrs. Rosa Parks' memory and legacy will be enshrined in the most hallowed halls of our government." The Congressman's remarks came during a reception he hosted, following President

George W. Bush signing legislation sponsored by Congressman Jackson and Congressman Mike Rogers of Alabama placing a life-sized statue of Mrs. Rosa Parks in the U.S. Capitol's National Statuary Hall.

During his remarks, Congressman Jackson also stated:

"By sitting down a half-century ago, Rosa Parks stood up against segregation, injustice and inequality. This humble, quiet and courageous woman -- the 'mother of the modern day Civil Rights movement' -- helped to change our country, to fulfill our nation's promise and ideals, and to inspire human rights activists around the world.

"The legislation to place a statue of Rosa Parks in National Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol is a fitting tribute to a true American heroine.

"The Rosa Parks statue will symbolize the nation's triumph and progression from segregation to integration, from oppression to equality, from division to union -- a "more perfect Union." It will be a testament to the fact that the long arc of history bends toward freedom and justice.

"For the millions of visitors to Statuary Hall each year, they will see her statue and learn her story. I hope that they also will be inspired to share her struggle -- the struggle for freedom, justice and equality.

"Her statue should be more than just a memento, but also a motivation. It should be more than a souvenir, but also a summons. It should remind, but also rouse present and future generations to action. For the legacy of Rosa Parks is a living one -- to confront injustice, to

challenge inequality and to construct a better America."

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Rosa Parks statue bill, H.R. 4145, on November 18th. Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts spearheaded the effort to pass the measure in the Senate.